

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3468

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PK, SHUM
SUBJECT: AMNESTY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS

REF: (A) ISLAMABAD 8374, (B) STATE 195508, (C) ISLAMABAD 8505,

1. THE DEPARTMENT CAN APPRECIATE THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN DEFINING AND DETERMINING THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS DETAINED FOR "POLITICAL REASONS".

2. MOST POLITICAL OBSERVERS ESTIMATED THAT, PRIOR TO THE JUNE-JULY PPP-PNA NEGOTIATIONS, TWO OR THREE THOUSAND PEOPLE WERE BEING DETAINED FOR "POLITICAL" CAUSES. THE MAJORITY HAD BEEN ARRESTED DURING THE POST-ELECTION POLITICAL TURMOIL. AS A CONCESSION DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS, FORMER PM BHUTTO SAID THAT HE WOULD RELEASE MOST OF THOSE BEING HELD. THE PNA HAS CONTENDED THAT, ALTHOUGH MANY PRISONERS WERE RELEASED, THE NUMBER WAS NOT AS HIGH AS BHUTTO CLAIMED. WE HAVE NO EXACT READING ON THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE RELEASED BEFORE JULY 5.

3. ON AUGUST 19 THE INDEPENDENT URDU LANGUAGE PAPER JANG ESTIMATED THAT GENERAL ZIA'S AMNESTY (REF A) WOULD APPLY TO SEVERAL HUNDRED REMAINING "POLITICAL" PRISONERS. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO OR THREE THOUSAND
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ESTIMATE MADE IN JUNE, AND THE "SEVERAL HUNDRED" FIGURE OF AUGUST REFLECTS BOTH THOSE RELEASED BY BHUTTO DURING NEGOTIATIONS AND THOSE RELEASED BY GENERAL ZIA AFTER JULY 5 BUT BEFORE THIS GENERAL AMNESTY. THE FIGURES SEEM ACCURATE TO US.

4. OF THOSE REMAINING IN JAIL, THREE GROUPS ARE IDENTIFIABLE. FIRST, THE MAJORITY ARE THOSE PNA PARTY WORKERS INCARCERATED

BY BHUTTO. SECOND, THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 50 PEOPLE BEING
HELD IN THE HYDERABAD CONSPIRACY CASE WHO, ACCORDING TO GENERAL
ZIA'S STATEMENTS, WILL NOT BE AFFECTED BY THE GENERAL MANESTY.
(THREE OF THOSE HELD HAVE RECENTLY BEEN RELEASED ON BAIL) (REF C)
THE THIRD AND SMALLEST GROUP IS COMPRISED OF POLITICAL AND REGIONAL
LUMINARIES, SUCH AS THE TWO SINDHI POETS WHO ARE HELD ON PRE-
JULY 5 CHARGES OF PROPAGATING ANTI-NATIONAL LITERATURE.
HUMMEL

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NNN

Message Attributes

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